

Ask SHIP

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Mary Phillips

Q: Does Medicare cover cardiovascular screening?

A: Yes, Medicare does cover cardiovascular screening. Cardiovascular screenings check your cholesterol and other blood fat (lipid) levels. High levels of cholesterol can increase your risk for heart attack and stroke. These screenings will tell if you have high cholesterol levels.

All Medicare beneficiaries are eligible for coverage of this preventive service. Medicare will cover all costs for tests to measure cholesterol, lipid and triglyceride levels, once every five years.

Cardiovascular disease and stroke are the #1 and #3 causes of death in the United States. Heart disease is the #1 killer of women over 25 years old. The good news is that heart disease can be largely prevented. February is American Heart Month and Friday, February 1st is National Wear Red Day.

Through American Heart Month and National Wear Red Day, the American Heart Association educates and empowers Americans to reduce their risk of heart disease and stroke.

You might be able to make lifestyle changes to lower your cholesterol and protect your heart. Life style changes include stop smoking, eating a heart healthy diet, managing your weight and diabetes, monitoring your blood pressure, increasing your activity level and exercising more often.

Q: Does Medicare cover any services to help someone quit smoking?

A: People with Medicare who are diagnosed with a smoking-related disease, including heart disease, cerebrovascular disease (stroke), multiple cancers, lung disease, weak bones, blood clots, and cataracts can get coverage for smoking and tobacco use cessation counseling.

These diseases account for the bulk of Medicare spending today. People with Medicare who take any of the many medications whose effectiveness is complicated by tobacco use

including— insulin and some medicines for high blood pressure, blood clots, and depression are also eligible for the counseling.

Medicare will cover up to eight face-to-face visits during a 12-month period. These visits must be ordered by your doctor and provided by a qualified doctor or other Medicare-recognized practitioner. You pay 20% of the Medicare-approved amount after you meet the yearly Part B deductible.

Address your questions to:

Ask SHIP
714 West 53rd Street
Anderson, IN 46013

Or HYPERLINK "http://www.Medicare.in.gov" www.Medicare.in.gov
1-800-452-4800

SHIP is a free, unbiased counseling program provided by the Indiana State Department of Insurance. For assistance, call your local SHIP site to make an appointment or call the state office at 1-800-452-4800 to obtain a list of local SHIP sites.